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1. Sinkiang road construction and maintenance and automobile repair and parts shops were, prior to 12 Apr 33, under the jurisdiction of the provincial Department of Communications. Shortly after that date however and up to October 1943, Governor Sheng Shih-tsai and his Soviet advisors set up the Sinkiang Road Building Agency (Sinkianskaia Glavnaia Dorozhnaia Stroitelstva - "Dorstroy") which took over all of these functions. The headquarters, or main offices, of Dorstroy were located in Urumchi (Tihva), the capital of the province. As in the case of all other Sinkiang Soviet-controlled organizations, although the Director of Dorstroy was a Chinese, the real control lay in the hands of a Soviet "advisor" whose last name was Kudriatsev. This Soviet advisor and his staff of six or seven Soviet engineers and approximately 12 Soviet office workers were all located at the headquarters of Dorstroy.

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2. In northern Sinkiang, north of the Tien Shan Range, Dorstroy maintained regional offices and automobile repair and parts shops in Urumchi, Kuldja (Ining) and Chuguchak (Tahcheng). The Urumchi regional office was managed by Nikolai Ivanovich Behteev until 1942, when he fell out of Soviet favor, was imprisoned and executed. It was located in the Russian sector of Urumchi and serviced both the Urumchi and Hami Regions, or administrative districts. The Kuldja office had jurisdiction over only the Ili Region, whereas the Chuguchak office serviced the Tarbagatai and Altai Regions. Dorstroy must have also had offices and automobile repair and parts shops in southern Sinkiang.

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The managers of these regional offices were either Soviets or pro-Soviet local Russians who were appointed by Kudriatsev.

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3. The afore-mentioned Dorstroy automotive repair and parts shops were not actually automotive garages. They were merely buildings within which a few tools and parts were stored and where there was a blacksmith who could weld and straighten damaged parts. There were no mechanics in these repair and parts shops, as all drivers in Sinkiang are required to be mechanics. Because of the lack of repair facilities in Sinkiang, each vehicle travelling the open road not only has to have an ample supply of fuel to ensure its arrival, but also a handful of spares for those parts which are likely to require replacement. If other than one of these parts is damaged or ceases to function, makeshift repairs are made on the road or in the next village which has a blacksmith's shop.
4. As no great skill or engineering know-how is needed in the maintenance and construction of Sinkiang roads, Dorstroy employed local unskilled Moslems as laborers. They were supervised on the construction sites by either Soviets or local Russians. Almost no mechanized equipment was used by Dorstroy in the maintenance and construction of roads in Sinkiang. The only equipment used on roads outside of the largest Sinkiang towns of Urumchi and Kuldja, were dump trucks which were rigged so as to enable them to either mount a scraping and pushing blade on the front and/or to pull a roller. The towns at Urumchi and Kuldja had several old model (about 1925) street rollers.
5. In Sinkiang there are basically three types of roads. The first is actually a route or trail used for centuries by the nomads of Sinkiang in moving their herds of cattle from summer to winter pastures. The second is a narrow path or road that has been formed through constant use by native arbas (an arba being a local type of cart with extremely large wheels). It might be added here that wherever the Sinkiang terrain allows carts to travel, without necessitating the construction of a road, there a cart road already exists. The third, best and only improved type of Sinkiang road is the shosse. It is, however, a very primitive highway by US standards. Shosse is a soviet term for an "improved" or graded road.
6. In Sinkiang, the shosses are old cart roads following major trade routes which have been graded and macadamized to allow speedier and safer automobile and truck travel. The Sinkiang shosses are usually about eight meters in width, sufficiently wide to allow two trucks to pass one another. Dorstroy constructed shosses by having hundreds of Moslem laborers dig ditches on both sides of the road, shoveling the dirt onto the roadway. Then this raised roadway, with a ditch on either side, is graded by the laborers so that it is high in the middle and slopes gently towards the ditches. The reason for making the shosse raised and rounded is to allow rain water to readily run off of the shosse and into the ditches. The next step is for Soviet dump trucks to bring in, where necessary, gravel which is spread over the roadway by the laborers. The last step is for these same dump trucks to attach a scraper to the front and a roller onto the rear and to complete the grading and rolling of the shosse.
7. Maintenance of the shosses is carried on in a similar manner. The laborers precede these specially equipped trucks and fill in any bad holes that may have developed in the roadway. These macadamized shosses, although primitive, are very satisfactory highways. This was proved during the period 1938 to 1943 when the Soviets were supplying the Chinese Army with military equipment over the main east-west shosse in Sinkiang. This shosse enters Sinkiang from Khorgos, USSR, runs for the full width of Sinkiang and through Singingai Gorge into Kansu Province. It was in constant use, both in winter and summer, by five to 10 ton Soviet trucks which were all loaded to full capacity. Yet, it stood up very well, needing only minor repairs right up to the time of my departure from Sinkiang. In 1940, although this shosse was over 10 years old, it was in perfect condition.
8. The Sinkiang Provincial Transport Agency was closely allied to Dorstroy, since it had jurisdiction over all types of ground transportation in Sinkiang. This organization was also operated by a Soviet advisor to Governor Cheng. When first coming into existence, shortly after 12 Apr 33, it confiscated all privately-owned motor vehicles, including trucks, passenger cars and motorcycles. These were later augmented by Soviet ZIS-5, AMO-3, GAZ-3 and ZIS-3 trucks, ZIS-3 buses, and GAZ and DMC passenger cars. The Sinkiang Provincial Transport Agency's main function was

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to provide all types of necessary vehicles and animals for the movement of government equipment, government-owned goods (which were purchased for sale to the Soviets), mail and government personnel. The various Soviet "expeditions" and advisory groups in Sinkiang operated their own vehicles and were independent of the Sinkiang Provincial Transport Agency in the field of transportation.

9. The Sinkiang Provincial Transport Agency, although it had jurisdiction over all types of ground transportation, only exercised its full control over motor vehicles and partial control over camel caravans. Thus, private individuals and firms had to rely on either camels, horses, ishik (donkeys), or arbas (native carts) for personal travel or the transportation of their goods within the province.

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